

**THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE
CASTLE EDEN PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON THURSDAY 20 MAY 2021**

Present:

Councillor Mrs M Wilmer (Chair)
Councillors L Taylor, M Carling, J Welch

Also Present: County Councillors R Crute and S Deinali, 2 residents

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

RESOLVED that Councillor Mrs M Wilmer be elected Chair for the ensuing year.

COUNCILLOR MRS M WILMER IN THE CHAIR

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR

RESOLVED that Councillor J Welch be elected Vice Chair for the ensuing year.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

5. APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR

RESOLVED that Mr G Fletcher be appointed Internal Auditor for the ensuing year.

6. REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

RESOLVED that the following Member be appointed to serve as representative of the Parish Council on the following external body for the ensuing year.

East Durham Association of Town and Parish Councils

Councillor Mrs M Wilmer

Smaller Councils Forum

Councillor Mrs M Wilmer

7. POLICE REPORT

The Clerk advised that there had been 15 incidents reported, of these, 9 have been road and A19 related.

ASB – 0, Burglary – 0, Theft - 1 (Farm gates), Vehicle crime – 0. The other 5 calls were incidents which were non-criminal or ASB related.

Councillors and residents were urged to look at the Keep In The Know site and sign up for the latest updates. This could be found at Keepintheknow.co.uk. It was a free service and members could choose which updates they received.

RESOLVED that information given be noted.

8. **THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING** held on **15 APRIL 2021**, copy of which had been circulated to each Member were approved and signed by the Chair.

9. **COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**

Councillor Crute advised that the pole was now in place for the speed visor to be erected. He had received calls from residents regarding the speed of wagons coming from the housing development in Blackhall. The main complaint was the condition of the road.

RESOLVED that information given be noted.

10. **PARISH COUNCIL CO-OPTION**

One candidate had expressed an interest in becoming a Parish Councillor. He addressed the meeting with his reasons for applying to be a Councillor. The candidate was duly proposed and seconded and a vote took place.

RESOLVED that David Gordon be co-opted to the Parish Council.

11. **CORRESPONDENCE**

There was no correspondence.

12. **PLANNING PROPOSALS**

Consideration was given to the following planning application

DM/21/01445/FPA Installation of front and rear dormer windows at 3 Bankside, Castle Eden

RESOLVED that no objection be made.

13. **CERTIFICATE OF EXEMPTION**

Smaller Authorities where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure did not exceed £25,000 in the year of account ended 31 March 2021 could certify themselves as exempt from a limited assurance review under Section 9 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015.

RESOLVED that the Certificate of Exemption be agreed.

14. **ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2020/21**

Consideration was given to the report of the Internal Auditor which examined the system of internal controls that were in place to ensure that the Parish Council may obtain an adequate level of assurances for its activities, a copy of which had been circulated.

The report gave details of the annual review of the internal control arrangements within the Council.

Members were advised that all Local Councils in England were expected to complete an Annual Return which summarised their annual activities at the completion of each financial year.

It was Members responsibility to ensure that financial management was adequate and effective and the Council had a sound system of internal controls.

A section within the Annual Return had been completed by the Parish Council's independent internal auditor and in his view the system of internal controls were adequate for the purpose intended and had been operated effectively. The Report recommended that the internal controls within the Parish Council were satisfactory.

RESOLVED that the Internal Audit Report 2020/21 be accepted.

15. **ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2020/21**

RESOLVED that the annual governance statement be approved and the following confirmed:

- 1 We approved the accounting statements prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations and proper practices.
- 2 We maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.
- 3 We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and codes of practice that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of the council to conduct its business or on its finances.
- 4 We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 5 We assessed the risks facing the council and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.
- 6 We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the council's accounting records and control systems.
- 7 We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.
- 8 We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on the council and, where appropriate, included them in the accounting statements.

16. **ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS 2020/21**

Consideration was given to the Statement of Accounts and asset register for the Year Ended 31 March 2021, a copy of which had been circulated.

RESOLVED that the Statement of Accounts and asset register be approved.

17. **FINANCE REPORT**

Balance as per bank reconciliation as 5 May was £

Bank statements were viewed by the Chair

PAYEE	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	CHEQUE NO
G Fletcher	Internal audit	£100.00	000678
CDALC	Subscription	£92.15	000679

St Andrew's Parochial Church Council

The Church had requested funding as in previous years towards the upkeep of the church yard at St James in Castle Eden.

RESOLVED that £600 be given towards the maintenance of the churchyard.

18. **VILLAGE MATTERS**

a) **ACE Report**

ACE had not been active due to COVID however litter picks could restart. The WI would restart in September. The heating system was to be replaced in the village hall. Planning Permission would be required and a grant would be applied for from DCC as part of the business energy improvements.

19. **ANY ADDITIONAL URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

Garden Centre – A large proportion of the trees had been removed and it was queried if planning permission was required.

RESOLVED that enquiries be made if permission was required.

Road improvements at A19 – it was queried if the road improvements to the A19 junction at Castle Eden would go ahead now the additional housing development at Wingate was about to begin.

RESOLVED that enquiries be made regarding the road improvements.